



The B.C. Mountaineer

The British Columbia Mountaineering Club

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NOTES ON THE FLORA OF LAKE O'HARA

During the two weeks camp held at Lake O'Hara by the B.C.M.C., the mountain flowers were apparently at their best, and although not comparable with the the prolific growth and displays of Alpines familiar to all who have camped within the Garibaldi Park area, there was quite a colorful showing in the meadowland and benches around Lakes Oesa and McArthur. Usually mountaineers have very little time, even if they have the disposition, to study mountain flora, the imperative urge to be "up and going" in order to attain their objective, not being conducive

to a critical observation of the surrounding plant life, but the oft repeated question of "What is this flower?" expressed during some of the lighter trips, prompted further investigation, and it might be of interest to members to know something more of the plants growing in that vicinity that were unknown to most at that time, time.

Going along the trail from Hector to Lake O'Hara, the altitude of which gradually rises from 5,200 to 6,600 feet, it is not surprising that the flowers most commonly met with were, with a few exceptions, the same as are found growing extensively in the Black Tusk meadows, such as the sweet scented orchid, the well known Habenaria, or Rein Orchid, the Valerian, Mountain Lupin, Arnica, Helianthus or Small Sunflower, the Anemone, Fleabane, Indian Paint Brush, Mountain Veronica and Grass of Parnassus, to name a few of the many which were everywhere in evidence, but largely disappeared within the 6,500 ft. altitude, their places being taken by others, to us, of a more uncommon variety.

For several miles one could not help but notice the gorgeous golden-yellow flowers and the grey-green foliage of a shrub that grew everywhere in such profusion. This was the Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*), a very showy flowered plant, and new to most of us. A pearlwort (*Sagina saginoides*), with its small star-like flowers on tufted stems, an alpine raspberry (*Rubus arcticus*) and the Black Alpine Blueberry (*Vaccinium oreophilum*) a dwarf variety only a few inches high, were also noted.

One of the most widely spread plants growing at the 6,000 ft. alt. and over, but with which none were then acquainted, was the common *Dryas* (*Dryas octopetala*). Many will know the plant referred to, having cream-colored flowers and primrose-like leaves, which was growing extensively all over the meadows, in some places carpeting the ground with its low growing foliage and prolific blossoms. Along the edge of the inflowing streams

at Lake O'Hara were found growing luxuriantly together, the Twisted Stalk (*Streptopus amplexifolius*) and the Mountain Meadowrue (*Thalictrum alpinum*), the latter having beautiful foliage, very similar to the garden variety. Right at the edge of the lake at campside, among the grasses, the Arctic Fleabane (*Erigeron uniflorus*), a small plant of daisy-like appearance with whitish flowers deeply clothed in purplish woolly hairs, was found growing and later noticed generally in similar locations. Another variety of erigeron, the Orange Fleabane (*Erigeron aurius*) with flowers of a deep yellow, was found growing freely on the bench land near Lake Oesa. Another plant growing in profusion was the Loco-weed (*Oxytropis Richardsonii*), with flowers sometimes yellowish or of a bluish purple that, while at camp, I casually referred to as "one of the vetches," a rough identification that hardly did this prolific flowering plant justice. A plant that attracted attention, growing in the meadows near Lake McArthur, was a dwarf columbine with yellow flowers—the Mountain Columbine (*Aquilegia thalictrifolia*), a plant of not more than five inches in height but with normally sized flowers. Amongst many plants noted around Lake Oesa was the little gem of a violet, the Arctic Violet (*Viola cyclophylla*). The specimen collected was less than two inches in height. In a similar location were an arabis—Alpine Rock Cress (*Arabis Drummondii*) having a small purple flower, together with a saxifrage (*Saxifraga nivalis*), a pretty little plant with its foliage of serrated leaves, and the yellow flowered *Gauba crassifolia*, quite new to inexperienced eyes, and *Saxifraga bronchialis* with its quite inconspicuous greenish flower, all found growing in close

communion with each other, and among the rocks a little above, the well-known phlox (*Phlox Douglassii*). Another common flower—a reminder of the buttercup—was a Mt. Cinquefoil (*Potentilla ovina*); a campion—Alpine Bladder Campion (*Silene Douglassii*) with its dark-striped, bladder-like calyx or outer envelope; Mountain Bells (*Stenanthium occidentalis*), with its long stemmed bell flowers of a yellow tinge, and *Zygadenus chloranthus*—an imposing name but a plant which has also an imposing looking flower—truly a magnificent plant with its cream-colored lily-like flowers with its long spear-like leaves.

In addition to the plants mentioned, which were more peculiar perhaps to this region than that of Garibaldi, others were observed that were familiar on the slopes or ridges in that district, such as *Phacelia* (*Phacelia sericea*) with its deep velvety blue flowers, a wintergreen (*Pyrolla minor*), and quite a number of specimens of gentian (*Gentiana glauca*) were located in the Valley of the Ten Peaks and between Wenkehemna and Ophabin Passes.

Two species of willows—*Salix restita* and *saximontana* were prominent. Of the conifers the Alpine Larch (*Larix Lyalii*) was the dominant species in that locality, the foliage of which were a factor in tending to soften the general appearance of the landscape.

The foregoing are merely a few of the plants most commonly seen and does not pretend to cover the flora of this particular locality. Undoubtedly, a diligent search would bring to light many others of a more uncommon character.

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The plants found at Lake O'Hara and not indigenous to the Garibaldi district were identified by Mr. Fred Perry whose research work in mountain flora is now so well known.

—W. W.

HOLLYBURN RIDGE AND PEAK

Sunday, December 16th, terminated our climbing schedule for 1928 with a most successful and enjoyable trip up Hollyburn Ridge and Peak.

Forty-five members crossed on the 8.45 a.m. ferry to West Vancouver and with an easy stride, and at peace with Father Time, leisurely climbed as one large contented family.

Many became intoxicated by the "nip" in the air and ere the Ski Camp was reached, Jack Horan forged ahead with orders to prepare fifty cups of coffee to lower the temperature of the party after swallowing so much altitude.

One hour for lunch at the Ski Camp and thirty-five members resumed their way to the peak. Glorious sunshine and views became general as the party climbed out of the fog blanket which covered the lower levels. Mt. Baker, Garibaldi and the Sawteeth all loomed up encircled by a hue of colors characteristic to a bright winter day in the mountains.

The peak was left behind at 3.30 p.m. and the last of the party arrived in town by seven o'clock. Charlie Dawson led the trip and Bill Henderson made a staunch endman.

—C. D.

CLUB SOCIAL

Members and their friends who interested in the club's activities are cordially invited to an evening of social entertainment to be held at the home of Charlie Dawson, 2490 1st Avenue West, on Wednesday evening, January 16th, 1929, at 8.30. The ladies are preparing an interesting programme, so come along and see for yourselves. These evenings have been most successful in the past and speak for themselves. A number 4 car will get you there. Get off at Larch Street and walk three blocks north.

So make it on the sixteenth. The grade is easy. Let's go.

EAST GOAT RIDGE

December 2, 1928

Starting out from the cabin Sunday morning at a reasonable hour, thirteen members under the leadership of George Wallis, followed the usual route up Grouse to the Plateau. From here the trail around Grouse Peak and Dam was taken until Goat Ridge was reached at which point we left the trail and climbed down to Kennedy Lake. We then climbed up Goat from the top of which a splendid view of the mountains to the North was obtained. All the Garibaldi Park group and Mamquam stood out exceptionally well. The mountains to the East were plainly visible, being mantled with a fresh fall of snow which made them look very imposing. After a short stay on the peak we started down the "Chimney" and followed the trail along the ridge to the main trail leading back to Grouse, which was reached early in the afternoon. The snow-fall was

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very light on the peaks for this time of the year but the indications are that there will be lots before very long. Although not a very strenuous trip, everyone was well satisfied with the outing. Those participating were:—Misses P. Chambers, N. Coulson, F. Riddock; Messrs. McKee, Ford, Gore, Hawksworth, Leddingham, Martin, Somerville, Warkman, Westall and Wallis.

WE WANT YOUR SUPPORT

So far this year the trips have been fairly well attended and we hope that they will continue to be this way. But we still think that a few more members might turn out. The trips are not strenuous this winter and most of them are starting out from the cabin, so come on out folks and enjoy yourselves. You don't know what a good time you are missing when you sleep in on a Sunday morning instead of being out in the hills in the fresh air.

LARSEN'S TRAIL

Although Sunday, November 18th, dawned cloudy, quite a goodly number of lusty mountaineers, led by Les. Golman, turned out on this trip, and were rewarded by sunshine and blue skies a little later in the morning. Although Larsen's trail can hardly be called a notable trip, yet in this instance it was distinctive in that the Endman, our worthy "Charlie the Pure," arrived at the peak first by half an hour or thereabouts! This was accounted for by the fact that at the commencement of the trail the party, consisting of twenty-one, divided—four or five, including Charlie, being wise enough (or foolish enough, whichever way you look at it) to follow the

regular route, while the rest of us, swayed by the desires of several long-legged members, allowed ourselves to scramble, an squirm, and at times to be dragged, hauled and pushed, up what is known as "Gully." In places the rocks were quite heavily coated with ice, while in other they were so loose that care had to be used, and in some of the "chimneys" the rope was put into use—so altogether we had an "interesting" climb. It was not until a large chunk of rock, loosened most probably by the thawing ice, came careering down the mountain-side, narrowly missing the head of Mrs. Johnson, that our esteemed President stated politely but firmly that he considered we had had sufficient "gully" climbing for the day, and we struck off and finished on the top of Eagle's Bluff. Believe me, girls, if you want to be appreciated, just miss a few rocks! It simply works wonders with your best beau!

Arriving at the top we found Charlie, chewing cookies on one side of his face—the other was disabled through toothache! In spite of this, however, he calmly asked us if we were "still pure." Having nearly tied ourselves in knots climbing the gully we refused to answer this question, but regained our equilibrium by eating a light lunch. As the day was yet young, several members of the party set off for Grouse proper, and some spent a few hours skiing—among them being Emmanuel Helly, of the Alpine Club of France, who was our honored guest on the trip. Mr. Helly is in love with our mountains, and enjoyed the trip very much—and I think we all heartily agreed with him that we had had a good time in spite of sundry bumps and bruises.

R. D. G.

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